CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 21 ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CIRCULATED BY ARGENTINA IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (S/1995/567)

1. The G-21 takes note of the draft resolution circulated to members of the Security Council regarding the proposed role for the Security Council on the question of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

2. The G-21 notes with concern that the draft resolution is silent on the vertical proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, on nuclear disarmament and on the continued existence and retention of nuclear weapons by the five nuclear-weapon States. In the Group's view, the huge nuclear weapons stockpiles in the possession of the nuclear-weapon States, continuing qualitative improvements to nuclear weapons systems and the development and production of new nuclear weapons must constitute a priority in the field of multilateral disarmament since these represent a grave danger to international peace and security. It is this issue which should be of special concern to the Security Council, in view of the overwhelming demand for the elimination of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, recognized and voiced in various United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

3. The Group believes that non-proliferation, in all its aspects, can be best promoted through the adoption and implementation of a legally binding, multilaterally negotiated Treaty for elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. It is high time that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) commenced negotiations on such a Treaty. This would be consistent with the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions which aim to eliminate respective categories of weapons of mass destruction entirely.

4. Any deviation from the role envisaged for the Security Council under the United Nations Charter or in certain circumstances under multilateral treaties on non-proliferation and disarmament would undermine the provisions of these treaties and conventions, including the inherent mechanisms for securing redress for the violations of their provisions. It would also call into question the value of painstaking multilateral negotiations on disarmament and arms control treaties in the CD.

5. In this context, the Group reiterates its position that the CD is the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament issues. Circumventing the CD or undermining the provisions of the existing treaties will seriously prejudice the ongoing negotiations in the CD on the CTBT and other issues.

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